



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Measure K Street Projects - Engineering Services Selection Procedure

MEETING DATE: January 4, 1995

PREPARED BY: Public Works Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the City Council approve a qualification-based selection procedure for outside engineering services for two Measure K street projects: Lower Sacramento Road widening, and Highway 12 widening under Highway 99, and authorize the Public Works Director to assemble a selection committee and oversee the selection process.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: On October 5, 1994, the City Council concurred with staff's recommendation that outside engineering services be obtained for the Lower Sacramento Road widening and Highway 12 widening under Highway 99 projects. Publicity from that meeting has resulted in the Public Works Department receiving nearly thirty letters of interest from engineering firms wishing to do this work.

In the past, the City has followed two general procedures for selecting engineering consultants. The first and simplest was for the Public Works Director to select a firm based on past work for the City, negotiate a scope of work and cost and present it to the City Council for approval. In other cases, a detailed scope of work and request for proposals was developed by City staff and a written/interview process was conducted to select a consultant for recommendation to Council for approval.

The first process, while very simple and fast, is not appropriate for these projects as we do not have a single firm that has worked for the City that offers a clear advantage to us. The second process is very time consuming, both for City staff and the responding firms.

Staff proposes to use a third process, one recommended by the Architects and Engineers Conference Committee of California which is composed of various private sector professional associations. Their recommendations were published in a 1993 document entitled "Qualifications-Based Selection, A Guide for the Selection of Professional Consultant Services for Public Owners". The Introduction and procedure summary from the document is attached.

Briefly, the recommended process would be:

1. Staff would request qualification statements from the interested engineering firms. This request would include a brief description of the project and desired work by the engineering firms;
2. Staff would select three or four of the most qualified firms for each project, depending on the number of qualification statements received;
3. The selection committee, composed of City staff, possibly other agency staff (i.e., COG, Caltrans, etc.), and one or two citizens, would interview the selected firms and choose the most qualified;
4. City staff would work with the selected firm to develop a detailed scope of work and contract;
5. The final scope of work and contract would be presented to the City Council for approval.

FUNDING: Measure K and Street Development Impact Mitigation Fee Program.


Jack L. Ronsko
Public Works Director

Prepared by Richard C. Prima, Jr., City Engineer
JLR/RCP/lm
attachment

APPROVED: 

THOMAS A. PETERSON
City Manager



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1.0 Introduction

When public officials utilize professional consultants to undertake a construction project, whether it involves a study, new construction or modifying an existing facility, the consultant's performance can influence the entire course of the project — economy, feasibility, public response, design, function efficiency, construction costs, operating costs, and maintenance costs during the life of the facility.

Some public owners do not undertake projects often enough to have experience planning for such a project, or to select a professional consultant in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.

What is QBS?

QBS Stands for “Qualifications-Based Selection”

QBS is a rational procedure which facilitates the selection of professional consultant services. The selection is based on qualifications and competence in relation to the scope and needs of the particular project. QBS entails a step-by-step process that will facilitate the owner's selection of a design professional on the basis of qualifications and competence in relation to the scope of the project and facilitates the development of an appropriate scope of work for a particular project. This process is straightforward and easy to implement. It is objective and fair. It can be well documented, and it is open to public scrutiny.

QBS meets the public owner's primary concerns to get the best available professional services for the taxpayers' money, and to conduct a fair and equitable selection process. QBS evolved from the public owner's need to be an “informed customer” and to have a logical, fair and objective means of selecting professional consulting services.

The term “professional consultant” is used in this document to represent any of the design professions, or combination therefore, including architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, land surveying, geotechnical and support services.

“Owner” is used in this document to represent the public user of design professional services.

Evaluation Form included. (See Appendix 4.18, Owner's QBS Project Evaluation.)

History

In October 1972, the federal government enacted Public Law 92-582, covering the selection of architects and engineers based on qualifications. This bill has since been known as the Brooks Selection Bill, as it was introduced by U.S. Representative Jack Brooks of Texas. During years of use by the federal, most state governments, and numerous municipalities across the nation, the use of qualifications-based selection has proven itself to be more efficient and less costly when considering total or life-cycle costs than the use of a selection system using price as one of its primary criteria.

Effective January 1, 1990, Chapter 10 of the California Government Code, Sections 4526-4529, commencing with Section 4525 and known as the Mini-Brooks Act, mandated local agencies throughout the state of California to select applicable professional consultant services on the basis of demonstrated competence and professional qualifications. Following passage of the law, the Architects & Engineers (A & E) Conference Committee of California formed a QBS Subcommittee to provide a documented understanding of the process.

3.0 How Does Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) Work?

QBS is a fair and rational procedure that facilitates the selection of a professional consultant on the basis of qualifications and competence in relation to the scope and needs of a particular project. One prominent Director of Public Works compares selecting a consultant to hiring an employee. Both work best as two-step processes: first, the selection is made, then the financial arrangements are agreed upon. In fact, many of the steps outlined below have similarities to employee selection procedures.

Local agency heads often adopt a formal policy and publish a procedure for the selection and use of consultants. This brings uniformity to different project selections and better orients staff, elected officials, and the community's consultants on the process by which projects will be awarded. Additional criteria may include published policy which deals with community-specific issues, such as affirmative action, local vs. non-local selection, and ensuring work is not overly funneled to only a few firms.

QBS evolves from many variables that must be tailored to fit each specific project's requirement and should include all or some of the following steps:

Procedures for Selection

1. The owner identifies the general services desired (scope of work).
2. The projected time frame is established.
3. A list of professional consultant firms appropriate to the project is compiled.
4. A consultant selection review group is appointed.
5. Letters of qualifications are requested from the identified firms.
6. Letters of qualifications are received and evaluated.
7. A short-list of firms to be interviewed is established.
8. A tour of the site and/or facility is arranged for short-listed firms.
9. Interviews are conducted.
10. Firms are ranked for selection.
11. All firms involved receive post-selection communications.
12. Negotiations are conducted relative to actual scope, services, fee and payment schedule.
If an agreement cannot be satisfactorily negotiated with the top-ranked firm, negotiations are terminated and the owner enters into negotiations with the second-ranked firm, and so on down the line, until agreement is reached and a firm is selected.
13. A contract is executed.

This step-by-step procedure and its variations are detailed in the following sections.